

For Immediate Release

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**Community Relations Commission Director Stowe
Departing after 15 years**

(Columbus) James L. Stowe, executive director of the Columbus Community Relations Commission, is stepping down from his post and relocating to Maryland, where he will be director for the Montgomery County Office of Human Rights. Stowe has served as executive director of the Commission since its inception in 1992. The agency provides leadership to the people of Columbus toward educating the citizens about cultural diversity, identifying and resolving community tensions and eliminating discrimination.

"I thank the Columbus community for wise counsel, encouraging support and guidance, but also for holding me accountable," Stowe said. "While there is yet much work to do, Columbus has made meaningful progress toward becoming a more inclusive city."

Stowe was a member of the United Way ACCORD Vision Council, which worked in partnership with the Columbus Dispatch and The Ohio State University Research Center to develop the most comprehensive race relations survey for the Central Ohio area. He has been a driving force in moving the city of Columbus toward a greater acknowledgement of diversity as a viable resource to the community through the Columbus Way Initiative.

"Jim has always been driven by a passion for diversity and equal opportunity," Mayor Michael B. Coleman said. "He has served the people of Columbus well and will be sorely missed."

Stowe has worked tirelessly to assist immigrant and refugee communities through the Mayor's New American Initiative. Jim is also host of a community affairs program on GTC3 called "Community Tapestry." Stowe has received awards and recognition for his efforts in community service and advocacy for human and civil rights.

"The Community Relations Commission congratulates and thanks Director Jim Stowe on his nearly 15 years of service," said Commission Chair Rebecca Nelson. "He is one of my personal heroes, and I wish him well as he departs for a new opportunity closer to his family."

Stowe's last day with the City of Columbus will be September 19. Mayor Coleman has appointed Deputy Director Napoleon Bell to be interim director of the Community Relations Commission upon Stowe's departure.